SARDAR JAGJIT SINGH AURORA: Well, I have not got the statement. I think they must have run out of it when I went to collect it...I have got it. I beg your pardon. May I take a minute to ask a supplementary? (*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: The figures supplied by the hon. Minister are very alarming. After the textile policy was announced in 1985, there are mounting losses and more and more mills are getting sick. I want to ask the hon. Minister whether this has induced any re-thinking on the rationale and execution of the policy. Or is it true, as per the newspaper reports, that the only solution that has been found is to amalgamate the sick units with the viable units and ruin both?

SHRI RAFIQUE ALAM: Sir, the hon. Member will appreciate that we have taken over the sick mills and we have already told that 103 sick mills are undergoing losses. You require what steps are being taken to rationlise this...

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: I am asking about chalk and the hon. Minister is replying about cheese!

I want to know whether any re-thinking has been done after these three years of mounting losses, of the original rationale policy announced.

SHRI RAFIQUE ALAM: Yes, yes.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: And what is your conclusion?

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: A committee has been set up! You don't know? (*Interruptions*).

SHRI RAFIQUE ALAM: The following steps are being taken for improving the performance. No. 1, selective modernisation programme; two,...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Suggestions of Textile Association of India for better performance by Textile Units

*281. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Textile Association of India has sought Central Government's permission to close down non-viable textile units and also to allow enhancement of capacities wherever possible;

(b) whether the Association has also requested that duty-free import of technology and raw materials at concessional rates be permitted in order to ensure better performance by the mills; and

(c) whether the Central Government have accepted the suggestions put forth by the Association, if so, what steps are being taken by Government to implement them and if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI RAFIQUE ALAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Association has suggested duty free import of technology and import of cotton and other fibres against export of cloth and yarn without any strings attached to them.

(c) According to the existing Textile Policy, where a unit has no expectation of becoming viable in a reasonable period of time, there may be no alternative but to allow the Unit to close provided the interests of workers are protected. Under the law, the permission for closure in individual cases is to be obtained from the State/Union Territory Government. Likewise, capacity expansion by existing units and capacity creation by new units is permissible under the Textile Policy Statement, subject to

the general industrial policies. As regards duty-free import of technology and raw materials at concessional rates, decisions in this regard are taken keeping in view the exigencies of the situation.

Long-term Loan from IMF

*282. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to start negotiations with the International Monetary Fund for a fresh long-term loan to meet the exigencies arising out of continued adverse balance of payments position; and

(b) if so, whether any final decision has since been taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Seizure of hashish in Bombay

*283. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item which appeared in the Hindustan Times of the 15th November, 1988 to the effect that in the biggest haul in recent times, Bombay Customs seized 2,600 Kgs. of hashish valued at over Rs. 23 crores;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and whether any arrest have been made in this connection: and

(c) what action Government have taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. On 13th November, 1988 the Bombay Customs seized 2,630 kgs. of hashish (charas), concealed in 90 drums out of a consignment of 275 drums under the export declaration as 'vermiculite', meant for export to Barcelona (Spain) for a consignee in Netherlands. However, investigation revealed that the ultimate recipient of these goods was a person based in Toronto, Ontario.

The precise value of the seized drugs cannot be determined as this is dependent upon various factors like purity of the drug, place of origin and sale, local demand and supply, etc.

The residential premises of the suspected persons have been searched. Two persons involved in this attempt of smuggling have been identified. They are absconding.

No arrest has been made so far in connection with the seizure in question.

Modernisation of jute mills

*285. SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the toal amount earmarked, and the amount out of that actually disbursed till 30th September, 1988 under the modernisation of jute mills programme;

(b) whether Government are aware that under the cloak of modernisation, jute mills are importing machinery like plastic tape lines to make union bags;

(c) whether he has received a representation from the All India Tape Manufacturers Association in this behalf; and

(d) if the answer to part (b) above be in the affirmative, whether it amounts to violation of the Jute Packaging Control Act, providing